

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
West Desert District  
Salt Lake Field Office  
2370 South Decker Lake Blvd  
West Valley City, UT 84119

November 2014

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## Draft Business Plan for BLM Salt Lake Field Office Campgrounds



**BLM**

Salt Lake Field Office



# **Draft Business Plan for BLM**

## **Salt Lake Field Office Campgrounds**

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_  
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## DRAFT

### Dear Reader:

I would like to present for your review and comment the *Draft Business Plan for BLM Salt Lake Field Office Campgrounds*. Under the authority of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Salt Lake Field Office manages three campgrounds at Simpson Springs and Clover Springs in Tooele County, Utah, and at Little Creek in Rich County, Utah. The draft business plan covers management issues such as user facilities, operating costs, fee rate changes, annual revenues, and future expenditures.

The Salt Lake Field Office proposes to increase camping fees for the public's use of its campgrounds. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 authorizes the BLM to regulate the use of the public lands, and the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) authorizes the BLM to collect recreational fees when sites and areas meet specific criteria. Currently, daily overnight use fees are \$5 per site at Simpson Springs and \$6 per site at Clover Spring. There is also a reservation group site at Clover Springs that costs \$20 per night. At Little Creek, there is no visitor use fee charged at this time. Fee rates at each campground have not been changed since 2005. In order to help offset current and future operating costs, the BLM proposes to set the individual daily user fees as follows: \$15 per site at Simpson Springs, \$12 per site at Clover Spring, and \$12 per site at Little Creek. New group site fees at Simpson Springs and Little Creek would be set at \$60 per night. The group site fee at Clover Springs would be raised to \$45 per night.

The objective of the *Draft Business Plan for BLM Salt Lake Field Office Campgrounds* is to provide you with information on how these public campgrounds are being managed and give you the opportunity to submit comments on the proposed fee structure at Simpson Springs, Clover Spring and Little Creek campgrounds. If you would like to provide public input, you can mail written comments to our office at: BLM Salt Lake Field Office, Attn: Ray Kelsey, 2370 South Decker Lake Blvd, West Valley City, UT 84119; or you may submit comments via email to [rkelsey@blm.gov](mailto:rkelsey@blm.gov). Please list "Campground Business Plan" in the subject line and provide any comments by **Dec. 10, 2014**.

Thank you for your interest and input in managing your public lands.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Hotze  
Field Manager  
BLM Salt Lake Field Office

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**Business Plan for  
BLM Salt Lake Field Office Campgrounds  
Recreation Use Permits  
WBS# LVRD UT240000: Salt Lake Field Office**

**Introduction**

This business plan has been prepared to meet the criteria defined in the “Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, 2004” (FLREA). The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) originally began collecting fees for the recreational use of public lands under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (1976) – known as the “organic act”. The FLREA recognizes the Bureau of Land Management’s authority to collect Special Recreation Permit fees for the recreational use of certain areas. FLREA allows collected Special Recreation Permit fees, as well as Special Area fees, to be retained locally and outlines how revenues are to be used for such things as facility repair, maintenance, enhancement, interpretation, visitor information, visitor services, visitor needs assessments, signs, habitat restoration, law enforcement related to public use and recreation, and direct operating or capital costs associated with the Recreation and Visitor Services program. At the Salt Lake Field Office (SLFO), the recreational use of campgrounds within the field office is managed through the Recreation Use Permit Program.

BLM Manual 2930, *Recreation Permits and Fees*, requires that each fee program have a business plan which thoroughly discusses fees and explains how fees are consistent with the criteria set forth in FLREA. Business plans are to assist management in determining the appropriateness and level of fees, cost of administering fee programs, and provide a structured communication and marketing plan. The primary purpose of the plans is to serve as public notification of the objectives for use of recreation fee revenues and to provide the public an opportunity to comment on these objectives.

In the SLFO, campground revenues are deposited in the SLFO recreation fee account (WBS# LVRD UT240000). These deposits include revenues from group sites and individual campsites. This business plan covers both these sources of revenue.

The data used to analyze and prepare this business plan was obtained through internal BLM tracking and accounting mechanisms such as the Recreation Management Information System (RMIS), Collections and Billing System (CBS), Federal Business Management System (FBMS), and other locally-generated recreation and visitor use tracking spreadsheets. For more detailed information, contact the BLM Salt Lake Field Office. Some data may be subject to Privacy Act requirements.

**Background and Authorities**

This business plan has been prepared to meet the criteria defined in the “Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act 2004” (P.L.108-447). The authorities and regulations for this business plan, including recreation fee collection for campgrounds, are:

- **The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), 1976**, [Public Law 94-579], contains BLM’s general land use management authority over the public lands, and establishes outdoor recreation as one of the principal uses of those lands. Section 302 (b)

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of FLPMA directs the Secretary of the Interior to regulate through permits or other instruments the use of the public lands. Section 303 of FLPMA contains BLM's authority to enforce the regulations and impose penalties.

- **The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA), 2004**, repealed applicable portions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act and replaced BLM's authority to collect recreation fees in 2004. This current law authorizes BLM to collect recreation fees at sites that meet certain requirements, allows BLM to keep the fee revenues at the local offices where they were collected, and directs how BLM will manage and utilize these revenues. FLREA also established the America the Beautiful – The National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass program.

This business plan has also been prepared pursuant to all applicable BLM recreation fee program policies and guidance, including:

- BLM Manual 2930, *Recreation Permits and Fees*, Rel. 2-296 dated October 22, 2007.
- BLM Handbook 2930-1, *Recreation Permit Administration*, Rel. 2-295 dated August 7, 2006.
- BLM Recreation Fee Proposals Step-by-Step Review & Approval Process, March 22, 2007
- BLM Instruction Memorandum 2007-028: *Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act – Final Public Participation Policy for Certain Recreation Fee Adjustments and Proposed New Fee Sites/Areas*
- BLM Utah Instruction Memorandum UT 2013-037: *Utah Recreation Fee Program Toolbox*

The BLM strives to manage recreation and visitor services to serve the diversity of public outdoor recreation demands while helping the agency maintain healthy and sustainable resource conditions so the visitors' desired recreation opportunities and experiences remain available. The BLM's goals for delivering recreation benefits from BLM-administered lands to the American people and their communities are:

- Improve access to appropriate recreation opportunities;
- Ensure a quality experience and enjoyment of natural and cultural resources; and
- Provide for and receive fair value in recreation.

This business plan will assist the SLFO in meeting these visitor service goals. This plan covers three campgrounds managed by the BLM at Simpson Springs and Clover Springs in Tooele County, Utah, and at Little Creek in Rich County, Utah.

### **A. Introduction to the Salt Lake Field Office Recreation Fee Program:**

#### Administrative Unit

The BLM SLFO falls under the Utah West Desert District (WDD) and encompasses 3.2 million acres of public lands primarily within Box Elder, Rich, Tooele, and Utah counties. All four of Utah's Congressional districts are represented within the field office's boundaries. However, the majority of the above public lands fall within District 1 (Rep. Rob Bishop) and District 2 (Rep. Chris Stewart). Public lands within western Utah County fall under District 3 (Rep. Jason



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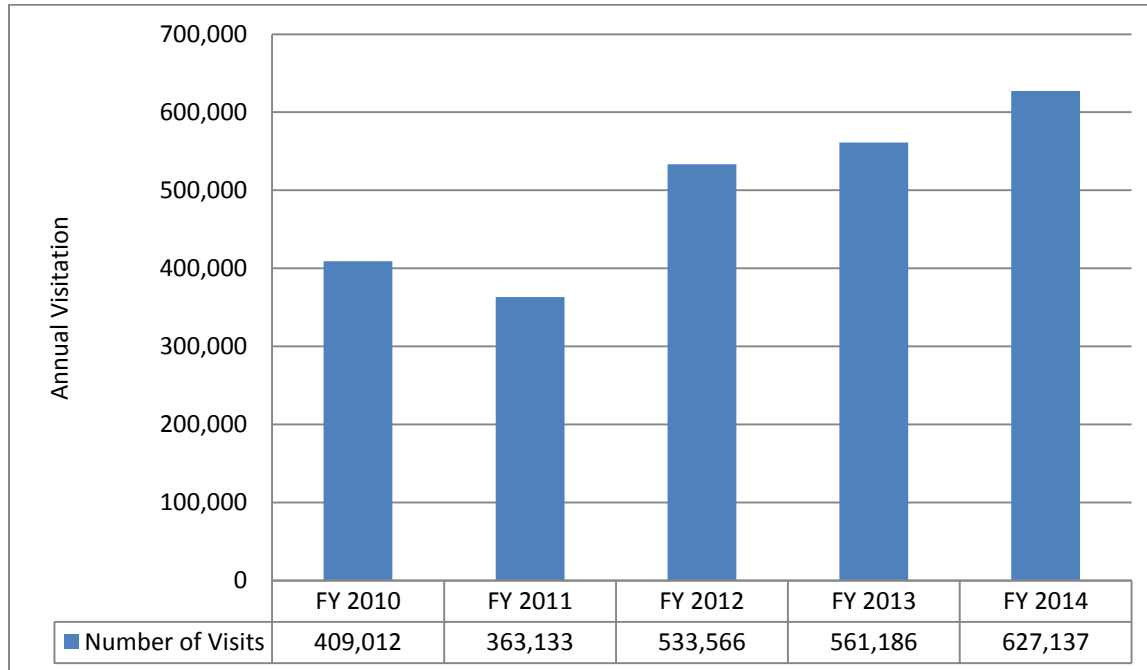
Chaffetz) and District 4 (Rep. Jim Matheson). Based on the last public census in 2010, 86.7 percent of the total population of Utah lives within the boundaries of the SLFO.

### SLFO Recreation Program and Visitation

The recreation program within the SLFO serves a large, diverse, urban-interface population visiting public lands primarily found west of Interstate 15 within the west desert of Utah. Major resources and attractions within the field office include the Pony Express National Historic Trail (NHT) and Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA), the Fivemile Pass Recreation Area, the Bonneville Salt Flats SRMA, and the Knolls Off-Highway Vehicle SRMA. Other less known but important recreation resources are the Central Pacific Railroad Grade, the Cedar Mountain Wilderness, the Deep Creek Wilderness Study Area (WSA), and the California National Historic Trail. Primary recreation activities that occur within the SLFO are land-speed time trials, off-highway vehicle (OHV) riding, camping, target shooting, and hunting. Other popular public recreation destinations found in northern Utah include the Uintah-Wasatch-Cache National Forest, Antelope Island State Park, numerous state-run public reservoirs, Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area, Strawberry Reservoir, Bear Lake State Park, Golden Spike National Historic Site, and Timpanogos Cave National Monument.

Estimated annual recreation visitation within the SLFO, as reported under RMIS, is based on traffic counter data and field monitoring. In FY14, the SLFO's visitation was recorded at 627,000 visits. The five-year average for annual visitation from FY10-FY14 is 498,807 visits. However, reliable comprehensive traffic counter data was not available until starting in FY11. Within the last decade, increases in annual visitation within the SLFO have roughly coincided with increases in population along the Wasatch Front. Future recreation use and visitation in the SLFO is expected to continue this trend. It's important to note that BLM land in the SLFO is open and accessible year-round to all types of users while access to popular recreation destinations in Utah's mountains is often limited half the year by snow cover.

Figure 1 - SLFO Estimated Annual Visitation



Most public land users to the SLFO are from the local Utah communities or adjacent states of Idaho, Nevada, or Wyoming. The exception to this rule would be at the Bonneville Salt Flats where visitors are a mix of local, national, and international in origin. In Box Elder County, visitors are often from the Ogden area, Brigham City, or southern Idaho. In Rich County, visitors are attracted by Bear Lake from all over the Wasatch Front, Cache Valley, and eastern Wyoming. Visitors to Tooele County public lands near Interstate 80 are often from Tooele, Davis, or Salt Lake County. Visitation along the Pony Express Trail corridor is mostly drawn from Tooele, Salt Lake, or Utah County. Other demographics associated with the SLFO's recreation visitation are difficult to identify because of the wide economic diversity of the population along the Wasatch Front. That being said, most visitors in the SLFO are from social groups that prefer to engage in such activities as recreational vehicle (RV) camping, OHV use, hunting, and target shooting. The Boy Scouts of America also make up another significant demographic user group in the SLFO and also provide a reliable source of volunteer assistance to BLM.

#### Applicable Land Use Plans

The SLFO recreation program falls under the governance of the following resource management plans (RMP): the Box Elder RMP, 1986, as amended; the Pony Express RMP, 1990, as amended; the Randolph Management Framework Plan (MFP), 1980; the Park City MFP, 1975 as amended; and the Isolated Tract Planning Analysis, 1985. Resource management plans within the SLFO have not been subsequently updated due to a general planning moratorium enacted through the National Defense Authorization Acts (NDAA) of 2000 and 2006 for all public lands lying under military-controlled airspace in western Utah.



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Other activity-level planning that governs recreation management in the SLFO includes the Bonneville Salt Flats SRMA plan, the Knolls Off-Highway Vehicle SRMA plan, and the Simpson Springs Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP). The SLFO sites encompassed under this business plan include the Simpson Springs Campground, the Clover Spring Campground, and the Little Creek Campground.

### B. Description of Each Existing or Proposed Fee Site:

#### i. Simpson Springs Campground



**Description:** The Simpson Springs Campground provides 20 campsites and is situated on the eastern edge of the west desert of Utah near the Simpson Springs station site on the Pony Express NHT. Simpson Springs was also the site of a significant Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp during the late 1930s and early 1940s just prior to the establishment of the US Army Dugway Proving Grounds during World War II. The campground is a very popular camping destination with Boy Scout groups, church groups, and families from the Wasatch Front.

**Activities:** Camping, hiking, picnicking, OHV use, mountain biking, horseback riding, wild horse viewing, scenic backcountry byway, Pony Express NHT enjoyment, and visitor interpretation.

**Location:** On the Pony Express NHT, 12 miles south of Dugway, Utah. See attached map.

**Elevation:** 5,100 feet

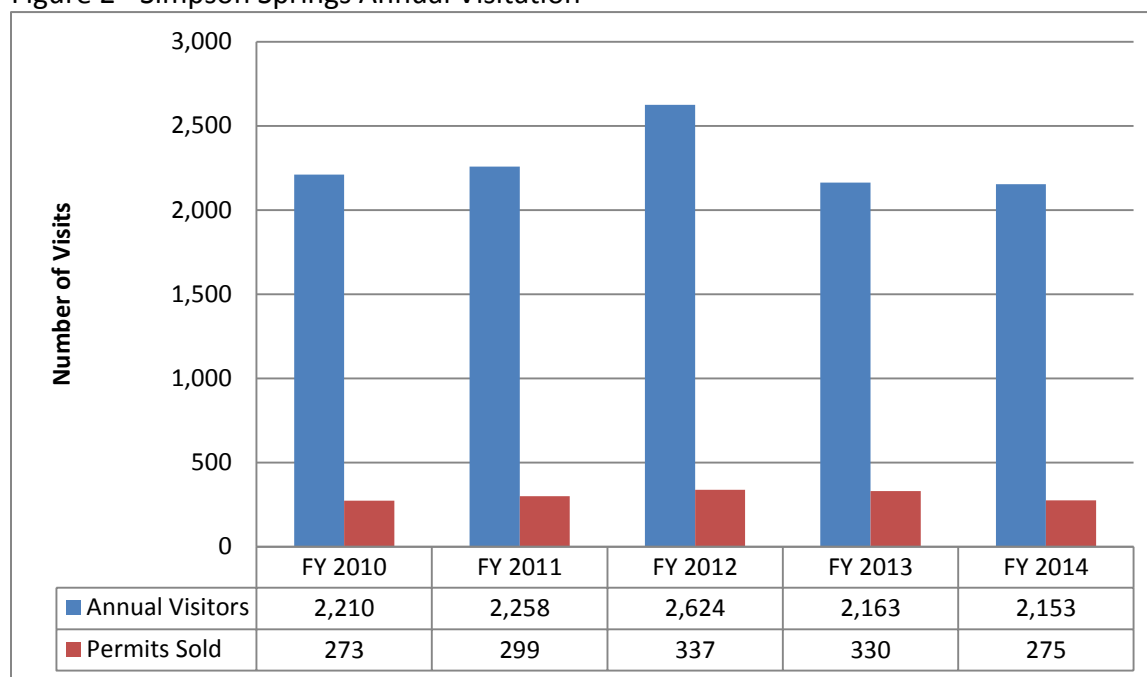
#### 20 Expanded Amenity Sites:

Tent or trailer space	Picnic table	Potable water	Access road	Fee collection	Visitor protection	Refuse containers	Toilets	Fire pits or grill
X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X

**Fees:** \$5.00 per campsite, per night. Limit two vehicles per site. Open year-round. No reservations required; all individual campsites available on first come/first serve basis.

**Groups:** Group site has not yet been developed.

Figure 2 - Simpson Springs Annual Visitation



Average visits = 2,282

Average permits = 303

## ii. Clover Spring Campground



**Description:** Clover Spring Campground has 10 individual sites and one group site located in eastern Tooele County between the towns of Rush Valley and Johnson Pass, Utah. The clear, bubbling waters of a prodigious natural spring offer relief from the desert heat and gave this site its name. Cottonwood trees frame the campground that is a popular spot for campers, hikers, horseback riders, and hunters. There are sites for traditional campers and day users in groups or families, as well as wheelchair-accessible restrooms.

**Location:** 20 miles southwest of Tooele, Utah on S.R. 199. See attached map.

**Elevation:** 6,000 feet

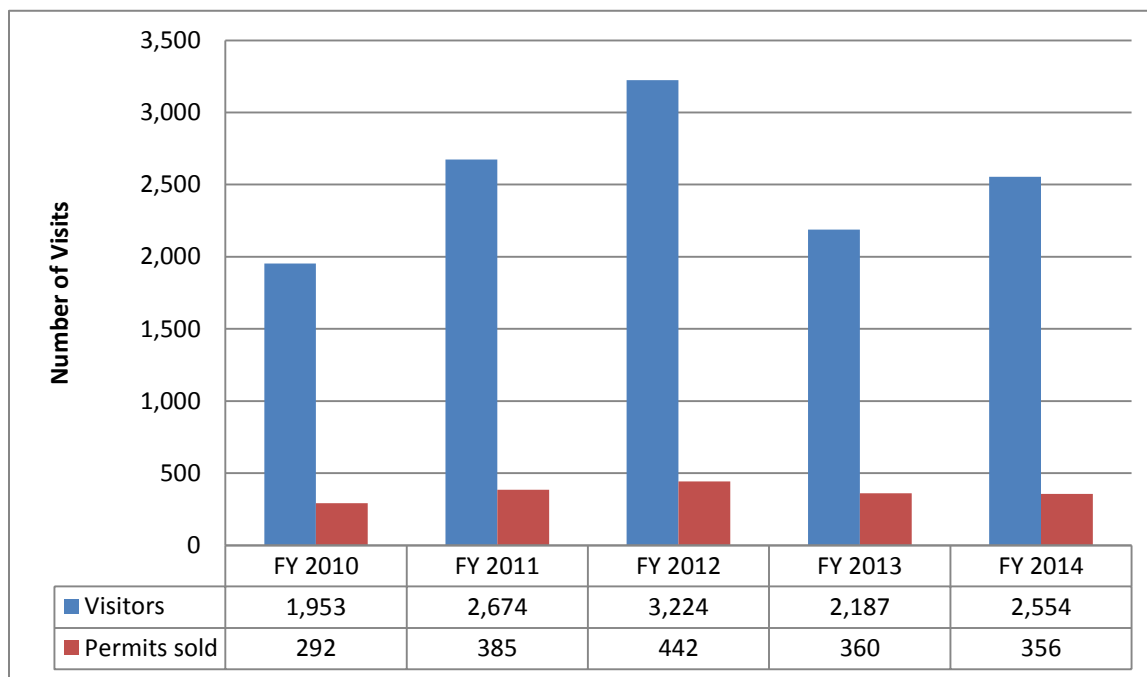
**Activities:** Camping, picnicking, hiking, horseback riding, and OHV riding. Season of use: typically May - October, depending on snowfall.

### 10 Expanded Amenity Sites and 1 Group Site:

Tent or trailer space	Picnic table	Potable water	Access road	Fee collection	Visitor protection	Refuse containers	Toilets	Fire pits or grill
X	X		X	X	X		X	X

**Fees:** \$6.00 per campsite, per night. Limit 2 vehicles per single occupancy site. The group site costs \$20.00 per night and reservations are required. Limit of 50 persons and 10 vehicles at group site.

**Figure 3 - Clover Spring Annual Visitation**



Average annual visits = 2,518

Average annual permits = 367

### iii. Little Creek Campground



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**Description:** Little Creek Campground has 10 individual sites and is situated near a man-made reservoir in the heart of the sagebrush country of Rich County, Utah. It provides access to hunting and fishing opportunities along the east slope of the Bear River Range. It also serves as an OHV trailhead for the Monte Cristo Loop and the Shoshone OHV Trail. There is a group picnic area which is popular with the local communities.

**Location:** Three miles west of Randolph, Utah.

**Elevation:** 6,400 Feet

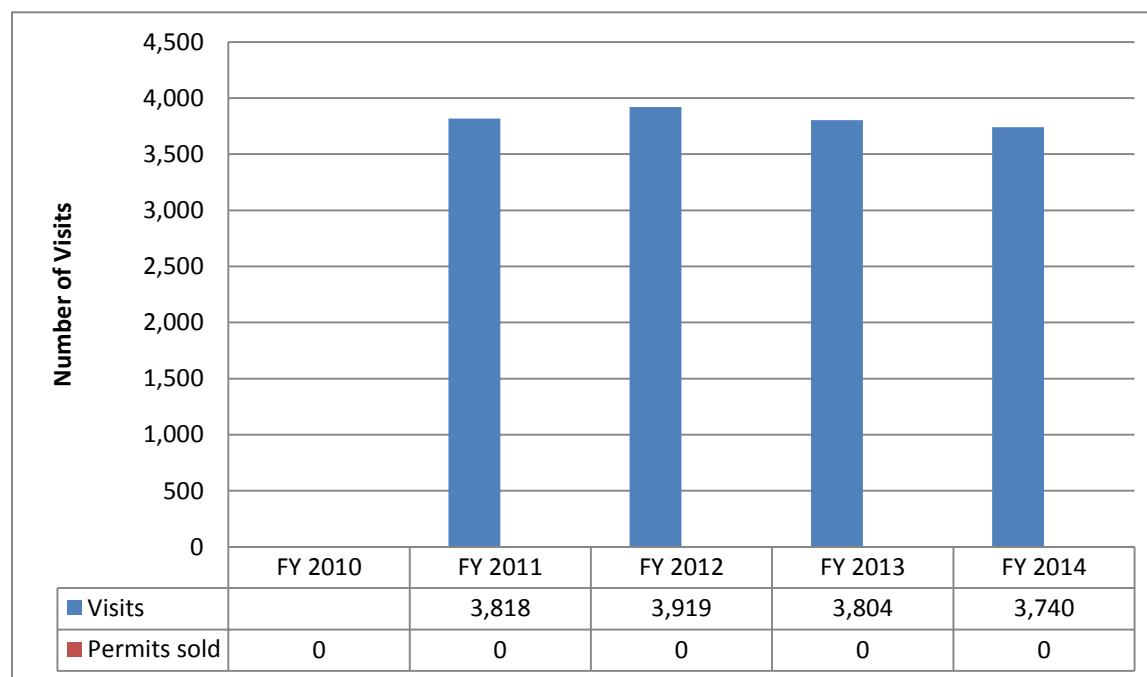
**Activities:** Fishing, hunting, OHV riding, mountain biking, and tent / RV camping.

### **10 Expanded Amenity Sites and 1 Group Pavilion:**

Tent or trailer space	Picnic table	Potable water	Access road	Fee collection	Visitor protection	Refuse containers	Toilets	Fire pits or grill
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

**Fees:** No fees are currently charged at this site. Season of use: May - October, may be open longer depending on snowfall.

**Figure 4 - Little Creek Annual Visitation**



Average visits = 3,820

Average permits (estimate) = 250

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Reliable visitor data at Little Creek Campground is not available for FY2010 as no traffic counter was installed and BLM does not have an onsite presence at the campground. It is assumed that a significant level of visitation at Little Creek includes day users who are only stopping to use the restrooms. Therefore, total camping permits sold each year will probably be less than expected in relation to traffic counter data.

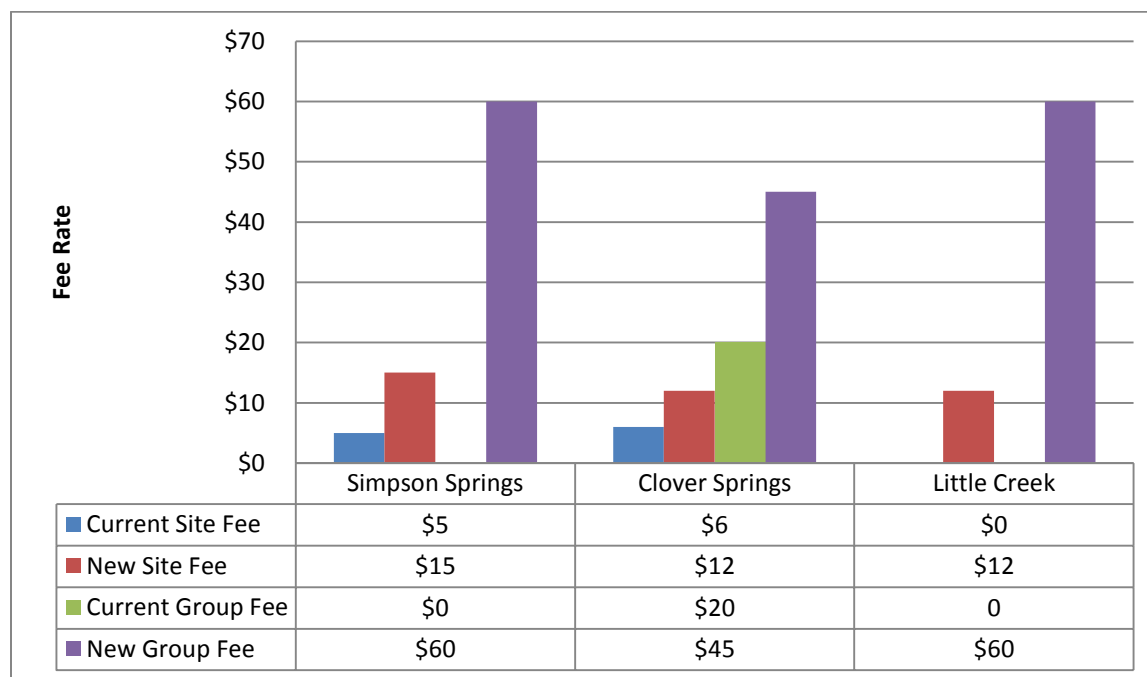
### **C. Proposed Modifications to Recreation Fee Rates:**

The SLFO proposes to increase camping fees for the public's use of its campgrounds. The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) authorizes the BLM to collect recreational fees when sites and areas meet specific criteria. Currently, daily overnight use fees are \$5 per site at Simpson Springs and \$6 per site at Clover Spring. There is also a reservation group site at Clover Springs that costs \$20 per night. At Little Creek, there is no visitor use fee charged at this time. In order to help offset current and future operating costs, the BLM proposes to set the individual daily user fees as follows: \$15 per site at Simpson Springs, \$12 per site at Clover Spring, and \$12 per site at Little Creek. New group site fees at Simpson Springs and Little Creek would be set at \$60 per night. The group site fee at Clover Springs would be raised to \$45 per night.

In recent years, annual operating budgets in the BLM have continued a steady downward trend. The SLFO has been operating its campground facilities under a deficit for many years. All three campgrounds covered in this business plan were constructed decades ago with only minor upgrades to existing facilities since inception. Annual revenues generated at each site cover only a fraction of the overall operating costs. The remainder of annual operating costs has been covered by funds generated through Special Recreation Permits.

The last time site fees were increased at the SLFO campground facilities was in 2005 when the average consumer price index was 201.6. The average price index for 2013 was 233.0, representing an increase of 15.6%. While the proposed fee increases will only partially cover annual operating costs at each site, generating revenue with daily fees commensurate with other similar expanded-amenity sites in Utah will offset price inflation since 2005, allow the SLFO to maintain visitor services at a more sustainable level, and provide better opportunities to upgrade existing facilities within the campgrounds.

Figure 5 - Proposed Fee Changes by Site



**Simpson Springs:** The new individual site fee reflects availability of potable water and the overall popularity of the site. All standard amenities are provided except for trash collection and visitor protection. The new group site would merge several individual sites together with good access to restrooms, overflow parking, and shade trees. Additional picnic tables, grill stands, and a fire pit would be installed. Maximum group site capacity is 50 persons.

**Clover Springs:** Both the individual site and group site fees are commensurate with similar facilities in the Stansbury Mountains and reflect a slightly lower level of standard amenities with no potable water, trash collection, or visitor protection on site. Maximum group site capacity is 50 persons.

**Little Creek:** Both the individual site and group site fees are commensurate with similar facilities in the Bear Lake region. All standard amenities are provided on site but individual sites currently lack any type of structures or trees for shade. BLM plans to improve shade structures, picnic tables, and fire pits at each site as funds are available. The group site has a shade pavilion, close proximity to water and restrooms, and overflow parking. Maximum group site capacity is 75 persons.

#### D. Average Annual Operating Costs:

The SLFO operates and maintains the Simpson Springs, Clover Spring, and Little Creek Campgrounds. Annual operating costs for the campground program include expenditures for visitor information services, group site reservations, monitoring of visitor use, fee collection, law enforcement services, annual maintenance, construction, toilet cleaning, and vault toilet pumping.



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An average of six permanent and four seasonal employees provide services to the campground program: three recreation specialists are involved at varying levels in planning, maintenance, contracting, fee collection, and visitor use monitoring; two permanent operations workers provide support for construction, deferred maintenance, and water system maintenance; two seasonal recreation technicians are responsible for fee collection, visitor use monitoring, annual maintenance, and spot cleaning; two seasonal information specialists field public inquiries about each campground and take group reservations; one full time employee handles fee deposits and administration; and two permanent law enforcement officers provide safety patrols in the campgrounds.

The cost of maintaining and cleaning the recreation sites includes full-time and seasonal labor, purchase of supplies (i.e. paint, tools, hardware, lumber, garbage bags, cleaning products, etc.), and a toilet cleaning contract. Seasonal recreation technicians are responsible for spot cleaning recreation sites and doing basic infrastructure maintenance such as building repairs, painting, and sign installation. Sanitation facilities are maintained through a toilet cleaning contract with a private firm that is responsible for weekly, biweekly, or monthly cleaning of each vault toilet based on season of use and location. Sewage is pumped from the vault toilets on average annually or bi-annually based on amount of use. Operations personnel repair or replace worn-out infrastructure, install new facilities as needed, and conduct periodic potable water testing. Law enforcement rangers regularly patrol the campgrounds for monitoring and compliance.

The program also supports government vehicles and equipment used to support patrols, maintenance work, resource and visitor use monitoring, and law enforcement. Vehicles routinely used include pick-up trucks, maintenance trucks, and law enforcement patrol vehicles. Campground maintenance and construction often requires the use of a backhoe, skid-steer loader, or other heavy equipment as needed.

### **Cooperative Agreements**

The SLFO has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place with Rich County and the town of Randolph, UT, for assistance with annual maintenance at the Little Creek Campground. Rich County and Randolph provide services that include trash collection, maintaining the potable water system, brush removal, road maintenance, and facility repairs. Meetings with county and local officials have identified a strong local desire to implement individual campsite fees, group camping reservation fee system, and upgrades to visitor services at the Little Creek Campground.

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Table 1 below identifies average annual expenditures on labor, services, and operations at each site. Customer service and fee collection costs at the Little Creek campground are future projections.

**Table 1 – Campground Operating Costs**

<b>Cost Type</b>	<b>Simpson Springs Campground</b>	<b>Clover Spring Campground</b>	<b>Little Creek Campground</b>
Maintenance (water system, sites)	\$1,000	\$500	\$0
Labor	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,000
Supplies	\$250	\$250	\$250
Customer service	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$1,000
Interpretation (signs, kiosks)	\$250	\$100	\$150
Fee collection	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Law enforcement	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$500
Toilet cleaning (contract)	\$3,200	\$5,000	\$4,500
Toilet pumping	\$1,500	\$1,000	\$1,000
Deferred maintenance	\$500	\$500	\$250
Lease payment		\$3,000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,700</b>	<b>\$16,850</b>	<b>\$9,650</b>

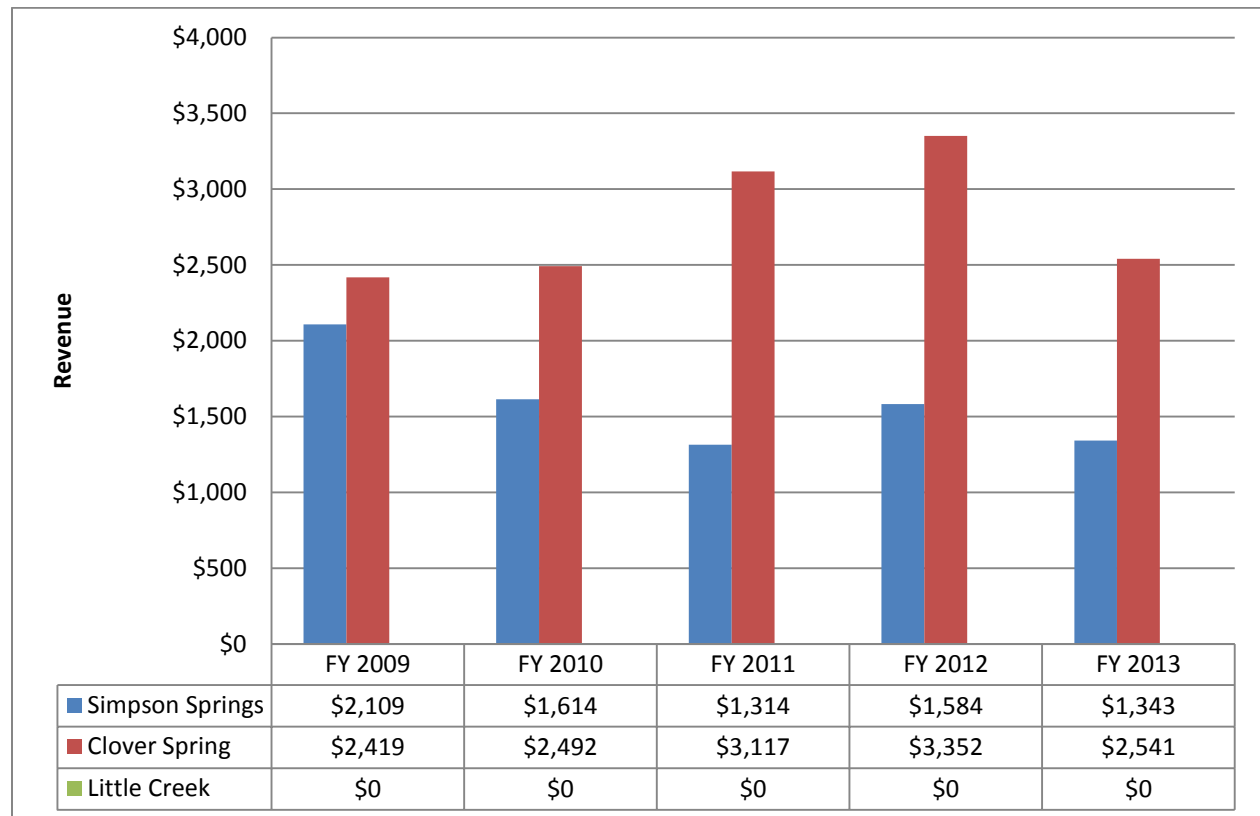
### E. Fee Revenue Analysis:

Campground fees are paid by those receiving services in SLFO campgrounds. Individual campsites are non-reservable; fees are paid at the site by each individual campsite holder. The group site at Clover Spring can be reserved and is paid for in advance through the front desk of the SLFO. Campground fees are deposited into a recreation fee (UT24) account indicating which recreation site they were collected at. Figure 6 displays revenues collected in this account for the past five years at each of the SLFO campgrounds. No fees have ever been charged at the Little Creek Campground up to this point. Figure 7 shows projected new annual revenues at each site based on the proposed fee increases. Figure 8 indicates the percent of estimated annual operating expenses covered by the fee increases.

#### i. Past Revenue

The data listed below in Figure 6 was pulled from the BLM Collections and Billings System (CBS). Average annual revenue generated by the SLFO campgrounds in FY09-FY13 has been \$4,377.00. This amount represents only 11% of total annual operating costs.

**Figure 6 - Annual Campground Revenue**

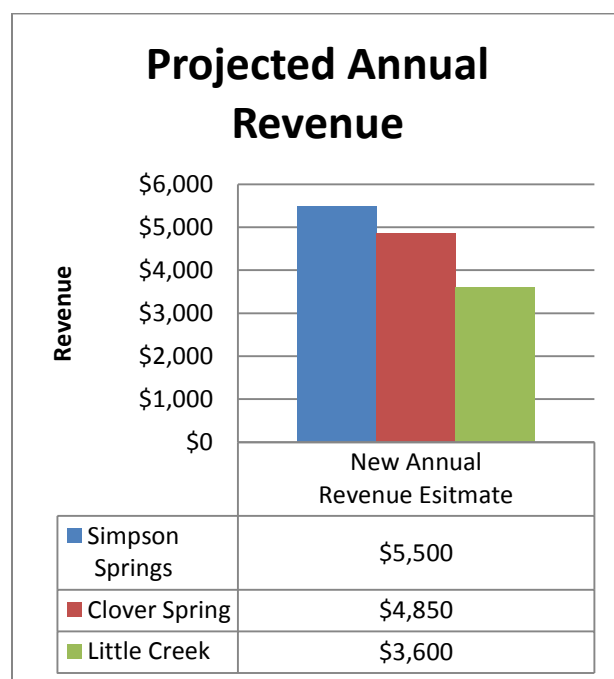


## ii. Anticipated New Revenue from Fee Increase

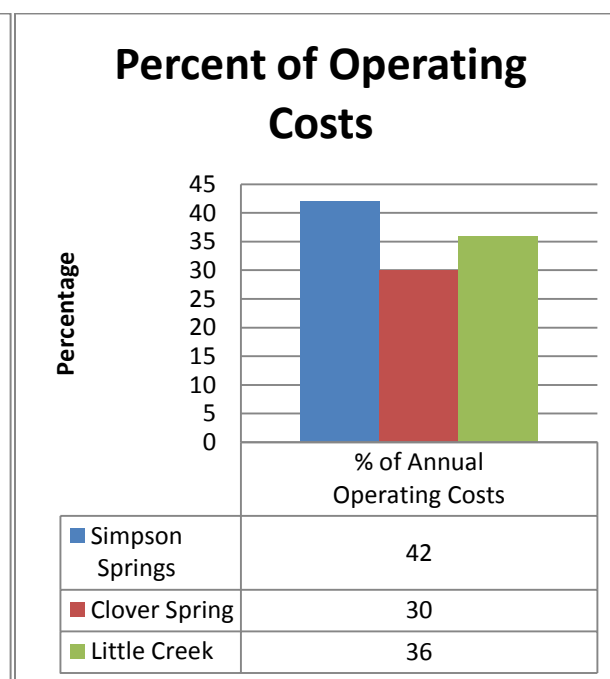
By increasing individual and group campsite rates, the SLFO recreation program has the goal of improving the overall sustainability of visitor services delivery by generating a higher percentage of overall operating costs for all campgrounds under its jurisdiction. Anticipated annual revenue generation from the fee increases proposed in this plan at all campgrounds would total \$13,951. The new revenue figure represents 35% of total annual operating costs, a 24% increase over the current budget situation for the SLFO.

Increasing camping fees to accomplish full cost recovery at SLFO campgrounds would put daily use fees at a level far in excess of similar campgrounds in the local and regional area. Such a fee requirement would not be reasonable to the public and would ultimately result in a drastic decrease in public use of the SLFO campgrounds. With only 3 campgrounds that receive modest seasonal use, economies of scale prevent the SLFO recreation program for recouping 100% of the operating costs at these sites.

**Figure 7 - Projected Annual Revenue**



**Figure 8 - Percent of Operating Cost**



**F. Priorities for Future Expenditures:**

Priority expenditures for the campground program include all aspects of maintaining current levels of service to campers in both individual and group campsites. This level of service includes maintaining a standard of cleanliness that would promote visitor health and safety, taking group site reservations, on-site patrol and fee collection, and regular maintenance of campground facilities including toilets, picnic tables, fire pits, signs, and parking.

As previously stated, the current fee revenues generated at each of the SLFO campgrounds have only been able to cover a fraction of the total annual operating costs. Consequently, the additional revenues from the proposed increase in the campground fee will be used primarily for the maintenance of existing program services to campers. Whenever possible, this would also include the replacement or major repair of aging campground facilities, such as fire grills, picnic tables, kiosks, and toilet buildings that deteriorate through visitor use and weather exposure.

To the degree available, and consistent with maintaining an adequate fund balance, some fee revenues will be directed toward upgrading campground facilities and providing additional visitor opportunities. Major campground upgrades or improvements would include adding better facilities for the elderly and persons with disabilities, tent pads, new fire rings, larger parking pads, new toilets, large shade shelters at group sites, small shade shelters at selected individual sites, and new equestrian sites.

Table 4 below identifies estimated future expenditures at each of the SLFO campground site in descending order of priority:

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**Table 2 - Future Expenditure Priorities by Campground**

Campground		Cost (\$)
<b>Simpson Springs</b>		
1	Fee collection and customer service*	3,500
2	Sanitation*	5,000
3	Group site development	\$5,000
4	Maintenance*	2,500
5	Law enforcement*	1,000
6	Campsite upgrades (16 units))	\$15,000
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$35,500</b>
<b>Clover Spring</b>		
1	Fee collection and customer service*	3,500
2	Sanitation*	6,000
3	Annual lease payment*	3,000
4	Maintenance*	1,500
5	Law enforcement*	1,000
6	Campsite upgrades (10 units, group site)	10,000
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>
<b>Little Creek</b>		
1	Fee collection and customer service*	3,000
2	Sanitation*	5,000
3	Maintenance*	1,500
4	Law enforcement*	500
5	Campsite upgrades (10 units, group site)	10,000
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$80,500</b>

\*Indicates annual costs

Projected expenditures include only those necessary for continued program operations and minor improvements. The proposed camping fee increase would not alone result in the near term accomplishment of the larger program infrastructure improvements previously described. Towards this goal, BLM would continue its long term efforts to gradually improve physical



facilities at campgrounds through a combination of regular appropriated funds, internal one-time project funds, external grants, and expenditure of user fees.

The SLFO will strive to maintain a positive fund balance in the UT24 recreation fee account of approximately \$50,000 to cover average annual operating costs at its campgrounds and a modest amount of emergency funds. The reason for this goal is to have the flexibility to obtain matching funds in applying for grants, effect emergency repairs, provide long-term stability for staff services, provide capability to meet unanticipated costs or to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities to improve services, or to use revenues to provide future recreation infrastructure to support visitor use.

#### **G. Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates:**

BLM policy authorizes the use of either a cost-recovery or fair market calculation method to analyze proposed fee rates. The SLFO is using a fair market comparison to support the need to increase fees at its campgrounds. Use of the cost recovery method was deemed not feasible at this time. With approximately \$40,000 in annual operating costs and anticipated annual recreation use permits around 1,000, using the cost recovery method would result in an average individual campsite daily fee rate of \$40. Given the level of visitor services compared to similar regional campsites, a \$40 daily fee rate at the SLFO campsites would be rejected by public consumers of recreation services and would probably result in a massive drop in public utilization of the SLFO campgrounds, a very high rate of non-compliance with fee payments, widespread public complaints, and a reduction in public support for the BLM mission.

Table 5 below compares fees being charged at public campgrounds locally and regionally for individual and group camping. The SLFO developed recreation sites discussed in this plan are most similar to facilities on nearby U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Utah State Parks campgrounds. The fee increases proposed for the SLFO sites, both individual and group, are below the regional average due to the fact that not all of the SLFO sites provide potable water, trash collection, paved access, and/or campground hosts. The SLFO campgrounds are also more remote and receive less visitor use than other comparable sites.

The data provided in Table 5 below was collected from the Recreation.gov website at the beginning of the 2014 summer camping season.

#### **Fair Market Value Fee Calculation**

**Table 2 - Single Occupancy Site Comparison**

Site name	Fee rate per night	Standard Amenities								
		Tent or trailer space	Picnic table	Potable water	Access road	Fee collection	Visitor protection	Refuse container	Toilets	Fire pits or grill
Simpson Springs CG - BLM	\$15	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■
Clover Spring CG - BLM	\$12	■	■		■	■	■		■	■
Little Creek CG - BLM	\$12	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Upper Narrows CG - USFS	\$14	■	■		■	■	■		■	■
Lower Narrows CG - USFS	\$14	■	■		■	■	■		■	■
South Eden CG - Bear Lake State Park	\$10	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Cottonwood CG – Bear Lake State Park	\$16	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
East Canyon State Park	\$12	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Rockport State Park	\$12	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Antelope Island State Park	\$12	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Spring Hollow CG – USFS	\$19	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Soapstone CG – USFS	\$18	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Renegade CG -USFS	\$18	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Albion Basin CG - USFS	\$19	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Tanners Flat CG - USFS	\$22	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Timpooneke CG – USFS	\$18	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■
Whiting CG – USFS	\$18	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Payson Lakes CG – USFS	\$18	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Little Sahara – BLM	\$18	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	

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Site name	Fee rate per night	Standard Amenities								
		Tent or trailer space	Picnic table	Potable water	Access road	Fee collection	Visitor protection	Refuse container	Toilets	Fire pits or grill
Yuba Lake State Park	\$20	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$16</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

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**Table 3 - Group Site Comparison**

Site name	Fee rate per night	Standard Amenities								
		Tent or trailer space	Picnic table	Potable water	Access road	Fee collection	Visitor protection	Refuse container	Toilets	Fire pits or grill
Simpson Springs CG - BLM	\$60	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■
Clover Spring CG - BLM	\$45	■	■		■	■	■		■	■
Little Creek CG - BLM	\$60	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Upper Narrows CG - USFS	\$40	■	■			■	■		■	■
Tanner Flats CG - USFS	\$65	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
South Eden CG - Bear Lake State Park	\$75	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Timpooneke CG - USFS	\$100	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
East Canyon State Park	\$75	■	■		■	■	■		■	■
Wasatch Mountain State Park	\$125	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Starvation State Park	\$75	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$80</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

## **H. Impacts of Changing or Not-Changing Fee Rates:**

The following is an analysis of potential impacts or conditions that could develop from both changing fees and not changing fees at the SLFO campgrounds:

### **i. Changing Fees**

- **Recreational:** Given recent budget reductions for BLM, fee increases will allow the SLFO to better cover the annual operating costs, especially the toilet cleaning contract which protects public health and safety at each campground. The SLFO will be able to maintain and potentially upgrade existing facilities such as restrooms, parking pads, picnic tables, fire pits, and/or grills. Most of the restroom facilities at the campgrounds are aging models that will require replacement in the future at a cost of approximately \$35,000 per unit. Visitors will continue to enjoy a quality recreation experience at a fair market value commensurate with other recreation sites within Utah.
- **Economic:** The SLFO campgrounds are fairly remote and not destination locations with high visitor use. Services provided by the small towns near each campground are limited to mostly food and fuel. No reliable data is available to inform how much SLFO campground visitors spend within the local communities. However, since it appears most visitors travel from home and only briefly pass through, it is estimated that local economic impacts are minimal.
- **Environmental:** Increased revenue will allow the SLFO to better maintain and potentially improve environmental protections at each campground site such as restroom facilities, fencing, signing, weed control, and law enforcement patrols. Use of campground hosts at each site is not anticipated due to variable seasonal use levels.
- **Socio-economic:** Each SLFO campground provides a valuable recreation opportunity for local communities and northern Utah residents. Increasing fees to levels commensurate with other campground sites in Utah may be unpopular initially but is not expected to create an undue financial burden on public land users. Retirees may be the only potentially low-income population that has consistently been observed using SLFO campground sites. Most seniors using public lands are eligible for 50% fee discounts with the America the Beautiful Senior Pass at all expanded amenity recreation fee sites including BLM campgrounds.

### **ii. Not Changing Fees**

- **Recreational:** Currently, the SLFO is not charging fair market value for campground fees. Due to normal annual changes in allocated funds and fee revenue generation, it is possible that not increasing campground fee revenue could force the SLFO to ultimately reduce visitor services or maintenance costs, reduce the season of use at each campground, or cut back in other programs funded through recreation fees such as law enforcement or customer service. Lack of funding would prevent BLM from upgrading or adequately maintaining facilities at each site. If fee revenue generated by other permits or sites were to be drastically reduced or eliminated in the future, it is entirely possible the SLFO would not be able to continue to operate the campgrounds covered by

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this plan. In the long term, not changing fees and increasing revenue could result in an unsustainable financial situation for BLM. Failure to provide and maintain visitor services would result in an overall loss of recreational opportunities and experiences on public lands.

- **Economic:** The SLFO campgrounds are fairly remote and not destination locations with high visitor use. Services provided by the small towns near each campground are limited to mostly food and fuel. No reliable data is available to inform how much SLFO campground visitors spend within the local communities. However, since it appears most visitors travel from home and only briefly pass through, it is estimated local economic impacts are minimal.
- **Environmental:** Failure to increase revenue at each site may prevent the SLFO from adequately maintaining and potentially improving environmental protections at each campground site such as restroom facilities, fencing, signing, weed control, and law enforcement patrols. A loss or decrease of operating revenue from other sources could result in BLM not being able to adequately maintain environmental protection measures at the campgrounds, especially sanitary facilities such as pit toilets and law enforcement patrols.
- **Socio-economic:** Each SLFO campground provides a valuable recreation opportunity for local communities and northern Utah residents. Failure to increase fee revenues to levels commensurate with other campground sites in Utah would continue the pattern of BLM not receiving fair market value for visitor services rendered on public land. Use of the campgrounds would remain relatively cheap or free for current visitors, but in the long run, continued operation of the campgrounds may not be sustainable for the BLM. If the BLM is forced to reduce services or close a campground site, local residents and senior citizens would no longer be able to enjoy the recreational opportunities provided by these facilities.

### **I. Public Outreach:**

Draft business plans must be made available for public review and comment for a minimum of 30 days. Public outreach on the *Draft Business Plan* will be solicited for 30 days from November 10 to December 10, 2014. A copy of the draft business plan will be available at the SLFO and posted online at [http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/salt\\_lake.html](http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/salt_lake.html).

Prior to increasing fees and implementing new group site fees, the SLFO will be conducting the following outreach efforts to notify the public of its opportunity to review and comment on the draft business plan:

- Posting an announcement on all campground kiosks;
- Issuing a press release to statewide print and broadcast media;
- Sending a letter to the Utah Public Lands Policy Coordination Office, Utah Association of Counties, Tooele Co. Commission, City of Tooele, Utah, City of Rush Valley, Utah, Rich Co. Commission, City of Randolph, Utah, and Boy Scouts of America local councils
- Publishing a Notice of Intent to Collect Recreation Fees in the *Federal Register* six months before establishing any new recreation fees (if approved) at Simpson Springs and Little Creek campgrounds.



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In addition, the SLFO will be presenting the campground fee proposals to the BLM Utah Recreation Resource Advisory Council (RAC) for its formal review. The Utah RAC is a 15-member advisory panel which provides advice and recommendations to the BLM on resource and land management issues for 22.9 million acres of public lands in Utah. The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act mandates that the appropriate Recreation RAC review all BLM recreation fee proposals prior to approval. Comments from both the public at large and the BLM Utah RAC will be considered prior to approval of the increase in the SLFO BLM campground fees.

### **J. Acronyms:**

BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CBS	Collection & Billing System
CCC	Civilian Conservation Corps
CG	Campground
FBMS	Federal Business Management System
FO	Field Office
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act
FLREA	Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act
MFP	Management Framework Plan
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHT	National Historic Trail
NPS	National Park Service
OHV	Off-Highway Vehicle
RAC	Resource Advisory Council
RAMP	Recreation Area Management Plan
RMIS	Recreation Management Information System
RMP	Resource Management Plan
RV	Recreational Vehicle
SLFO	Salt Lake Field Office
SRMA	Special Recreation Management Area
SRP	Special Recreation Permit
SST	Sweet Smelling Toilet
USFS	United States Forest Service
WDD	West Desert District
WSA	Wilderness Study Area

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